

CGTP-IN expresses deep sorrow and indignation for another humanitarian tragedy in the Mediterranean and criticises EU policies on immigration and asylum

The CGTP-IN expresses its deep sorrow and indignation for another humanitarian catastrophe in the Mediterranean Sea, which took the lives of nearly 900 people, adding to the many thousands dead, who especially over the last 5 or 6 years, transformed this Sea into a true graveyard of children, women and men who, in growing numbers, are trying to reach the shores of Europe, looking for a better life or simply fleeing from death, caused by bloody armed conflicts in their countries of origin, in North Africa, Middle East or Sub-Saharan Africa.

These massive movements of people, who try to escape from poverty and war devastation, seeking jobs or asylum, has deep rooted causes especially in the growing inequality among continents and countries, resulting from capitalism's increasing exploitation of workers and peoples, and of the natural resources of countries of origin, where, trying to secure growing profit and geostrategic domination, they launch wars of aggression, occupation and interference.

The CGTP-IN further declares that the current magnitude of this humanitarian tragedy also results from the totally wrong EU external policy, especially implemented in recent years in relation to the Southern Mediterranean countries in which, with the excuse of supporting the peoples who aspired to an "Arab Spring", has been politically destabilising several countries in the region, namely Libya, a country which, after the intervention of the European armed forces, fell into total chaos.

The European Union and its member states' hypocrisy is particularly shocking, when they now convene an Emergency Summit, after so many years of deaths in the region, instead of having promoted aid to the development of those countries, as they committed themselves in the framework of the United Nations, on a solidarity basis. On the contrary, what the EU imposed on a large number of these countries, were partnerships with a neocolonial approach that suffocate growth, job creation and sustainable development of these countries in Africa and in the Middle East.

Hypocrisy, with armed intervention, aggression and interference conducted by major European powers such as France, Italy and the United Kingdom, with shocking examples like Libya, Syria, Mali, Chad, Central African Republic, Somalia, Eritrea, etc.

Hypocrisy, with “securitarian” EU measures regarding third country immigrants, testified in the presence of war vessels to try and stop the movement of immigrants, in the framework of the Frontex Agency, instead of the presence of rescue facilities, with a humanitarian perspective; the adoption of anti-immigration European Directives, like the ill-fated “Return Directive” and the permanent stigmatisation of immigration associated with terrorism.

Hypocrisy of the EU institutions, who solely blame the terrible human trafficking networks that use the desperation of thousands of people who are extremely vulnerable, concealing that these networks emerge and feed from the recent European Union immigration and external relations policies, in the shadow of the international community’s indifference.

The CGTP-IN declares that we have had enough of cynicism, silence and empty words from the European Union and from the majority of its member states. It is time to stop pain, death and this terrific humanitarian catastrophe. Migrants and asylum seekers are entitled to life, work, security and social inclusion in equality and solidarity.

It is absolutely necessary and urgent a change of policies in the EU that lead to the adoption of measures as well as to efficient and secure mechanisms to monitor migration flows and right of asylum, with a welcoming, solidarity and humanistic perspective concerning third country nationals.

In order to respond to this catastrophic and widespread situation in the Mediterranean, the CGTP-IN and a group of several trade union organisations recently created a Trade Union Network for Migration in the Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Africa.

On this painful occasion, the CGTP-IN sends its deep condolences and solidarity to the families of the deceased immigrants in the terrible shipwreck.

The CGTP-IN reaffirms that it will continue its active engagement in the struggle for the end of conflicts and for peace in the Mediterranean region and for migration and asylum policies that respect human life and dignity and that promote inclusion and solidarity for all.

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CGTP-IN Migration Department